

What is claimed is:

- 1    1.    An apparatus, comprising:  
2        a pellicle fused to a frame; and  
3        a reticle attached to the frame.
- 1    2.    The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:  
2        the reticle is fused to the frame.
- 1    3.    The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:  
2        the reticle comprises fused silica.
- 1    4.    The apparatus of claim 3, wherein:  
2        the frame comprises fused silica.
- 1    5.    The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:  
2        the reticle is to be used in a lithographic exposure operation in manufacturing  
3                integrated circuits.
- 1    6.    The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:  
2        the pellicle comprises fused silica.
- 1    7.    The apparatus of claim 6, wherein:  
2        the frame comprises fused silica.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:  
2 the pellicle is fused to the frame along a seam between the pellicle and the  
3 frame.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:  
2 the pellicle has a local tilt of less than 10 microradians.

1 10. A method, comprising:  
2 fusing a pellicle to a frame at a first seam between the pellicle and the frame;  
3 and  
4 attaching the frame to a reticle.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein:  
2 said attaching the frame comprises fusing the frame to the reticle.

1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein:  
2 said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs approximately concurrently with said  
3 fusing the frame to the reticle.

1 13. The method of claim 10, wherein:  
2 said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs before said attaching the frame to the  
3 reticle.

1 14. The method of claim 10, wherein:

2           said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs after said attaching the frame to the  
3           reticle.

1   15.    The method of claim 10, wherein:  
2           said fusing the pellicle to the frame comprises using a laser beam.

1   16.    The method of claim 15, wherein:  
2           said using the laser beam comprises using an infrared laser beam.

1   17.    The method of claim 16, wherein:  
2           said infrared laser beam is produced by a CO<sub>2</sub> laser.

1   18.    A system, comprising:  
2           a support to hold a pellicle and a frame in place for a fusion attachment between  
3           the pellicle and the frame;  
4           a laser device to fuse the pellicle to the frame;  
5           a structure to position a first seam between the pellicle and the frame in a path  
6           of a laser beam from the laser device; and  
7           a control device to move at least one of the pellicle and the laser relative to one  
8           another to move at least a part of the first seam through the path of the  
9           laser beam.

1   19.    The system of claim 18, wherein:  
2           the support is further to hold the frame and a reticle in place for attachment to  
3           one another.

1    20.    The system of claim 18, wherein:  
2            the control device is to move at least one of the pellicle and the laser relative to  
3            one another to move all of the first seam through the path of the laser  
4            beam.

1    21.    The system of claim 18, wherein:  
2            the laser device comprises a CO<sub>2</sub> laser.

1    22.    The system of claim 18, wherein:  
2            the support is further to hold a reticle and the frame in place for a fusion  
3            attachment to one another;  
4            the laser device is further to fuse the frame to the reticle;  
5            the structure is further to position a second seam between the frame and the  
6            reticle in the path of the laser beam from the laser device; and  
7            the control device is further to move at least one of the reticle and the laser  
8            device relative to one another to move at least a part of the second seam  
9            through the path of the laser beam.